

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claim 2 is amended, and claim 15 is canceled. Accordingly, claims 2 and 9-14 are pending in this application.

In particular, claim 2 is amended to incorporate the features recited in claim 15.

Claim 2 is also amended to recite a major surface of a substrate as opposed to a side surface of the substrate. Applicant respectfully submits that the terms "major surface" and "side surface" are understood by one of ordinary skill in the art. Accordingly, no new matter is added.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments:

(a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; and (c) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects over U.S. Patent 5,764,315 to Yokota et al. claims 2, 9-11 and 13-15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), and claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). This rejection is moot with regard to the canceled claim 15, and is respectfully traversed with respect to the remaining claims.

The Office Action asserts that Yokota discloses or renders obvious all elements recited in claims 2 and 9-15. Applicant respectfully submits that Yokota does not disclose or suggest a spread illuminating apparatus in which a bar-like light source is provided at and parallel with a side surface of a transparent substrate, wherein a plurality of straight groove  
portions are formed directly on a major surface of said transparent substrate intersecting one  
another, whereby light traveling in a direction substantially parallel to a major surface of the

transparent substrate is reflected at said plurality of straight groove portions in a direction substantially perpendicular to the major surface of the transparent substrate, as recited in claim 2.

Yokota discloses an apparatus in which a light source 33 is placed next to a light guiding plate 32. See Fig. 12 and col. 9, lines 9-23. Yokota discloses providing ridges on transparent substrates 60a and 60b which are distant from the light source 33, but does not disclose or suggest providing ridges on the light guiding plate 32 which is next to the light source 33. See Fig. 28 and col. 10, lines 12-16. Thus, Yokota does not disclose or suggest a spread illuminating apparatus in which a bar-like light source is provided at and parallel with a side surface of a transparent substrate, wherein a plurality of straight groove portions are formed directly on a major surface of said transparent substrate intersecting one another, whereby light traveling in a direction substantially parallel to the major surface of the transparent substrate is reflected at said plurality of straight groove portions in a direction substantially perpendicular to the major surface of the transparent substrate, as recited in claim 2.

As discussed above, Yokota discloses providing ridges on substrates 60a and 60b. See Fig. 28 and col. 10, lines 12-16. The transparent substrates 60a and 60b are separate transparent substrates, such that the peak lines of the ridges in the transparent substrate 60a merely form angles with the peak lines of the ridges on the transparent substrate 60b, but the peak lines on the transparent substrate 60a do not actually intersect the peak lines on the transparent substrate 60b. See Fig. 28. Therefore, Yokota does not disclose or suggest a spread illuminating apparatus in which a bar-like light source is provided at and parallel with a side surface of said transparent substrate, wherein a plurality of straight groove portions are formed directly on a major surface of said transparent substrate intersecting one another, whereby light traveling in a direction substantially parallel to the major surface of the

transparent substrate is reflected at said plurality of straight groove portions in a direction substantially perpendicular to the major surface of the transparent substrate, as recited in claim 2.

Yokota discloses reflecting light from the light source 33 that is traveling in a direction parallel to a major surface of the light guiding plate 32 into the direction substantially perpendicular to a major surface of the light adjusting sheet 50 or 60. See Figs. 12 and 28 and col. 9, lines 9-23. As discussed above, Yokota does not disclose or suggest providing ridges to the light guiding plate 32. Thus, Yokota does not disclose or suggest reflecting, at a plate that is provided with ridges, light that is traveling in a direction substantially parallel to a major surface of the light guiding plate 32 into a direction substantially perpendicular to a major surface of the transparent substrate 50 or 60. Therefore, Yokota does not disclose or suggest a spread illuminating apparatus in which a bar-like light source is provided at and parallel with a side surface of said transparent substrate, wherein a plurality of straight groove portions are formed directly on a major surface of said transparent substrate intersecting one another, whereby light traveling in a direction substantially parallel to the major surface of the transparent substrate is reflected at said plurality of straight groove portions in a direction substantially perpendicular to the major surface of the transparent substrate, as recited in claim 2.

For at least the above reasons, Yokota does not disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in claim 2, and claims 9-14 depending therefrom. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2, 9-11 and 13-15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), and claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 2 and 9-14 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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